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attached to them. Millet is the source of food for almost eight months, extending from September to April. The same applies to barley, which is the food crop during summer. Wheat bread is a delicacy enjoyed now and again, and usually connected with festival and religious occasions. It is also the crop that provides mainly the substance, with the addition of chicken or pigeons, of mutual food gifts on events of marriage, birth and circumcision, as well as the bread that is to be offered to guests. It is also wheat that is normally sold in the market, or exchanged for goods in the shop. Hence the season for weddings and circumcision ceremonies falls only after the harvest of wheat, when it is abundant in the village. More than in any other seed, the villagers are deeply interested in the price of wheat. The price of wheat is the first topic a villager returning from town will discuss with his people who will be all too eager to listen. In an often-heard argument between a cloth-merchant and a farmer, the latter, in attempting to reduce the price of the cloth, will retort to the merchant, 'Do you know how much wheat is worth?'

In connection with food, the writer recalls a tentative suggestion to one of the villagers that one could have a meal without bread, to which the horrified man immediately replied, 'There is no Strength, nor Might save with Allah! May God preserve this bliss for us.' He then enquired how one could get filled without bread. 'Certainly, bulkiness is one of the main things in a satisfactory meal, and nothing is more filling than loaves of bread.'

Bread is not only filling, but also possesses an aura of sacredness, being believed to be the essence of life. The name given to bread is 'aish' which literally means life. It is profane to put bread on the ground, and every effort must be made to pick up any crumb that falls to the ground for fear of it being trodden on.[1] Bread, like written words on paper, which might contain something from the Koran, must be respected. Before mother sweeps the house, children go looking for pieces or crumbs of bread or bits of paper with writing on them, and either give them to birds or goats in the former case or put them in the fire in the case of paper. Children are also enjoined to kiss bread if it falls from their hands on the ground, and if they find it lying in the street to remove it into a crevice in the wall. They are punished if they throw bread from their hands when angry or annoyed, as this might make the 'baraka' fly from the house.

Another deep incentive for work is the desire to emulate and attract social approval. The belief of the villager that nobody, at least in his village, is intrinsically better than any other person, gives him a feeling that all are equal. The strength of the impulse for emulation is clearly expressed in some of their often-repeated maxims: 'Without emulation the world would not have been populated and developed', 'Even com-

[1] Something similar to this has been mentioned by E. W. Lane, which he describes as 'The excessive and unreasonable respect of the Egyptians for bread', *Manners and Customs*, p. 290.

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THE AIMS AND METHODS OF SOCIALIZATION IN SILWA

them for some time. Boys and girls between the ages of four and seven are often heard talking about the 'silowa' roaming through the village at night on its way from the hills to its nightly drink from the Nile. The 'ghool' is another imaginary beast, with a huge and hairy body, to whose attacks the children are exposed during their sleep. Other ferocious animals, such as dogs and wolves, are also invoked by mothers to induce the child to come home early or to accept food.[1]

Some of the children's games concern themselves with the establishment of a hierarchy in the order of fears. A child would move his fingers in front of another child's eyes, challenging him, by asking: 'Whom do you fear more, your father or God?' If the child blinks, then that indicates that he fears his father more than God. This is sometimes asked of a younger child without attempting to make him blink, merely to test his knowledge. The same puzzle is also posed in a slightly different manner. An older boy would ask a younger boy the question: 'There is a very small boy in the market whom nobody can see, do you fear him or me more?' The proper answer is expected to be 'him' as the invisible small boy in the market is supposed to signify God. In this type of guessing game, it is obvious that the children learn that fear is the symptom of recognizing the dominance of the supernatural authority of God over that of the worldly authority of the father. Moreover, children test each other through the expression of fear as to whose authority they first submit, the paternal or the maternal uncle.

The fear of sacred objects is also inculcated during the period of childhood. The child is made to believe in their blessings as well as their dangers. He is taken to a saint's tomb or wears a Koranic charm when he is ill. At the same time he is warned against urinating near a saint's tomb or running about in the cemetery for fear of incurring the saint's wrath. The same double attitude is inculcated in him with regard to bread, milk, treading on written paper, passing over ashes from the burning of a charm made by someone else, or stepping over someone's legs. Durkheim has pointed out that the sacred objects are invariably thought of as possessing the power of sanctity and danger simultaneously. Psycho-analysts have traced this cultural phenomenon to the emergence into the field of consciousness of the dual role of the mother, and the ambivalent attitude connected with it. This probably mirrors the process whereby 'good objects' such as the mother or her milk turn into 'bad objects' such as the denying and frustrating mother and faeces.[2]

[1] E. S. Stevens writes: 'The Silowa occupies much the same role in Iraki legend as the witch or ogress in Western fairy tales. She is a water spirit, for she dwells in the river or in caves near running streams. Her body is covered with long hair, her breasts are pendent, reaching her knees, and when she wishes to suckle her children, whom she carries on her back, she throws her breasts over her shoulder. . . . She is fond of human flesh . . . she has a partiality for human lovers.' *Folk Tales of Iraq*, p. xvi, O.U.P., 1931. The classical word for 'Silowa' is 'Silah', pl. 'Saali'.

[2] George Devereux, 'Magic Substances and Narcotics of the Mohave Indians', in *British Journal of Medical Psychology*, Vol. XXII, 1949, p. 115.

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and lived all his time never deviating from the right path,
and never associating with those people whose hearts have been blackened.
When he died he showed signs of piety, and his body neither decayed, nor was attacked by worms.

. . . . . .

Shams al giyama danat gum ya mureed safir,
gum jahhiz azzad min gabl al-miaad safir,
wi gabbad al-arwah daiman al-'ibad safir,
as-shaib wiyya as-sigam ju lak ya fata mursal.
wi likul umnah ata liha nabi mursal,
ata Jibril bil burag li annabi mursal.

The sun of resurrection is approaching, a warning for departure.
Prepare yourself before the hour comes.
The seizer of souls is always apparent and about.
Grey hairs and sickness are messengers for you.
For every nation there has been a messenger,
and Gabriel delivered God's message to Muhammad.

On some occasions these 'Boys of the Path' go to visit their 'brothers' in another village. On their approaching that village, the heralding of which would be by the visitors' chanting in unison popular verses and by beating on a small drum, the latter would walk out to receive them before they enter the village. They would offer them tea and dates and spend the rest of the night reciting verses or holding a 'zikr'.

Some of the adolescents and youths in the village do not take part in either the singing or mystic activities, for they are not encouraged to do so by their parents, and they are satisfied by only gathering in the neighbourhood for chatting. On asking some of these boys why they did not join in such activities, they replied that they wanted to attend to their livelihood, and as they usually felt tired through the day's work they could spare no time or effort for such activities.

It must be pointed out that it is not maintained here that interest in religious matters is a psychological consequence of puberty and adolescence, or that the attitude towards sex is being learnt only at this stage. Such norms as mentioned earlier are being imbibed gradually from childhood. With regard to religious matters, children start by learning about God's power at an early stage, even in their play and riddles. On going to the Kuttab they know how to recite the major Islamic creed, 'There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his Prophet', learn the obligation of fasting through the adult practice and through their own attempts to fast half a day, a day or more according to their capacity in imitation of adults. As far as sex norms are concerned, they begin to express themselves in separate play as early as the age of eight and nine years. But with the dawning of adolescence, the child finds himself awakened to the cumulative